



**Project 226 Wed. Night
Bible Study
March 18, 2020**

**KINDNESS IS
contagious.**

God's extreme kindness towards humanity changed everything. Had it not been for God's kindness to forgive our sins, we wouldn't be able to have a relationship with him. We wouldn't have the hope of eternal life with Christ.

2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1-13 (read together)

For a Fun Family Time, try this Game Option

Supplies: a variety of objects that are awkward in shape or hard to carry (such as baby dolls, textbooks, measuring cups, stuffed animals, a crouton, a blanket, a pillow, etc...)

note: You will need enough items for each team to have an equal amount

Game: Carry All Competition

Game Prep— if possible, divide into two teams of equal size. Choose a starting/finish line. Place objects you've collected at intervals and random positions getting further away from the starting line until all items are in place.

To Play the Game—At the signal, the first player for each team will pick up the first object that is lying at their feet. Then, they will race to the next item and pick it up, without dropping the first item. Continue this trend, picking up items along the way, until every item has been collected and then they will return to the starting point without dropping anything.

As a fun variation, if someone does drop an item, they have to freeze for a full five seconds, pick up what they dropped, and then continue on. The first person must pass off the objects to the next person in line, who will then reset the course as quickly as possible. The third person in line will go down the line, picking up the objects along the way and carry them back. The team to complete the relay first, wins!

TEACH

Today, we're going to learn about a man with an unusual name...Mephibosheth. (pro. Meh-fib-o-sheth) The Bible tells us about a time when king David is looking for his best friend's son, Mephibosheth, to show him kindness and raise him to a place of honor. David's best friend was Jonathan. Jonathan died in battle and left behind a son, Mephibosheth.

Mephibosheth's grandfather was King Saul and the son of David's best friend, Jonathan. Mephibosheth was only 5 years old when he is first mentioned in the Bible. His story begins in the book of 2 Samuel. David and Jonathan made friendship promises to each other, saying that they would always honor and care for each other's families no matter what happened.

ASK: Do you have a best friend that you would do that for? (allow time for answers)

Maybe you've made a promise to your best friend about something else at a different time. If so, you know that promises between friends are important to keep. David knew that, and he vowed to keep his promise. In a terrible battle one day, both Jonathan and his father, king Saul, were killed. When this happened, the nurse who took care of Mephibosheth thought they should escape. It was custom at that time that if the king were killed, everyone in his family would be too so that there would be no one in the lineage of that ruler left to take the throne.

READ: *2 Samuel 4:4; "Saul's son Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth, who had not been able to walk since he was five years old. It happened when someone from Jezreel told his nurse that Saul and Jonathan had died. She hurried off with the boy in her arms, but he fell and injured his legs."*

SAY: His nurse panicked and she ran away with him in order to save his life in case anyone tried to kill him because he was in the lineage of king Saul. That means he would be next in line to be king. Mephibosheth survived but he fell and became crippled.

The Bible isn't very clear about exactly how Mephibosheth's feet were hurt, other than that the fall left him disabled, but we do know that his feet were injured and he didn't walk the same after that. He grew up to be a very kind man, but he stayed hidden from society just in case the new king would find him and want to hurt him.

Well, David had finally become king and he remembered the promise that he had made to his friend Jonathan. That promise was to take care of each other's families. He wondered if Jonathan had any family still alive, so he decided to investigate.

David called on Ziba, who had been a servant in king Saul's palace. David asked him if he knew any of Jonathan's family who might still be alive. Ziba knew of a crippled son. David found out where that crippled son, Mephibosheth, lived and sent for him. David said, "Bring Jonathan's son to me. Find this son of Jonathan and bring him to me."

When Mephibosheth heard that king David wanted to see him, he must've been frightened considering the custom of that time. Mephibosheth mustered up the courage and went to see king David. What a surprise it was when he learned that king David was thrilled to see him! Here was Jonathan's son, standing before king David. David missed his friend so badly but having Mephibosheth right there somehow made him feel a little better. King David told Mephibosheth not to be afraid. And king David showed him extreme kindness.

David offered him an unbelievable present. King David gave Mephibosheth ALL the land that had belonged to his grandfather, king Saul. And that wasn't all...king David invited Mephibosheth to come to the palace and eat his meals at the king's table. That was a place where only family and the closest friends were invited.

Even though Mephibosheth thought that going before king David could only be disastrous, the kindness that David showed honored Mephibosheth. Also, king David assigned Ziba and all of Ziba's family and servants to Mephibosheth so they could take care of the land that David had given him. Extreme kindness changed everything.

The same is true for our relationship with Christ. God shows extreme kindness to us because of who His Son is, Jesus Christ. Had it not been for God's kindness to forgive our sins, we wouldn't be able to have a relationship with Him. We wouldn't have the hope of eternal life with Christ.

God shows extreme kindness to us because of who Jesus is.

Just like favor was shown to Mephibosheth because of his father, God shows favor to us because of our relationship with His son, Jesus. King David can teach us all a lesson about what it means to show kindness to people who may not have done anything to deserve it. Mephibosheth wasn't an enemy but he didn't have a relationship with king David like his dad did.

I wonder what our schools, our families, and our communities would look like if we were willing to act like David. He honored a promise that he had made many years prior and gave honor to his best friend's son. Look at the similarities of David's actions towards Mephibosheth and God's actions toward us.

1 Mephibosheth felt unacceptable to king David. We are unacceptable to God.

2 David looked to Mephibosheth. God is looking for us.

3 David showed extreme kindness to Mephibosheth because of who his father was. God shows extreme kindness to us because of who Jesus is.

4 David gave Mephibosheth a new home. God will give us a new home in heaven.

Most of us are willing to show kindness, but we don't know where to start. Opportunities to show kindness are all around us. Let's pray and ask the Lord to help us see ways to show kindness with brothers and sisters, older people, parents and others we meet.

(PRAY)

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think it means to “be kind”?
2. How do you show kindness to others?
3. Who is the kindest person you know? What do they do that demonstrates kindness?
4. How does being kind show that you love God?
5. If you are not kind to others, do you think that affects how others view you as a follower of Jesus? Why or why not?
6. What did you learn from the story of king David and Mephibosheth?
7. Are you good at keeping the promises you make to your friends? How could you be better at it?
8. Do your friends keep the promises they make to you? How does that make you feel?
9. Think of one thing you can do this week (that you don’t normally do) that would show kindness. What?
10. Think of someone who isn’t kind to you. Take a couple of minutes and pray for that person.